

struck at the heart of what it means to be an American and at the values that have always defined us as a Nation. In 1997, the most recent year for which we have statistics, there were more than 8,000 reported hate crimes in our country—almost one an hour. Now is the time for us to take strong and decisive action to end all hate crimes, and I reaffirm my pledge to work with the Congress to pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

But we cannot achieve true tolerance merely through legislation; we must change hearts and minds as well. Our greatest hope for a just society is to teach our children to respect one another, to appreciate our differences, and to recognize the fundamental values that we hold in common. As part of our efforts to achieve this goal, earlier this spring, I announced that the Departments of Justice and Education will work in partnership with educational and other private sector organizations to reach out to students and teach them that our diversity is a gift. In addition, the Department of Education has issued landmark guidance that explains Federal standards against sexual harassment and prohibits sexual harassment of all students regardless of their sexual orientation; and I have ordered the Education Department's civil rights office to step up its enforcement of anti-discrimination and harassment rules. That effort has resulted in a groundbreaking guide that provides practical guidance to school administrators and teachers for developing a comprehensive approach to protecting all students, including gays and lesbians, from harassment and violence.

Since our earliest days as a Nation, Americans have strived to make real the ideals of equality and freedom so eloquently expressed in our Declaration of Independence and Constitution. We now have a rare opportunity to enter a new century and a new millennium as one country, living those principles, recognizing our common values, and building on our shared strengths.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 1999 as Gay and Lesbian Pride Month. I encourage all

Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that celebrate our diversity, and to remember throughout the year the gay and lesbian Americans whose many and varied contributions have enriched our national life.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

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Proclamation 7204—Flag Day and National Flag Week, 1999

June 11, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since its adoption in 1777 by the Continental Congress, the Stars and Stripes has symbolized the promise of America. This promise—of equality, justice under the law, freedom from tyranny, and inclusion in a government of the people—beckons immigrants to our shores today just as it has for more than two centuries. Each time the Stars and Stripes is raised over our homes, public buildings, schools, or community gathering places, it proclaims that our Nation's great experiment in democracy is alive and well.

The stately design of the Stars and Stripes celebrates America's diversity while proclaiming the unity of our Nation. Its white stars, whose shifting constellation has chronicled the growth of our Nation, are the ancient symbols of a sovereign domain; they lie on a field of blue that represents loyalty, justice, and truth. Thus our flag describes the unique Republic designed by our founders, in which States that vary widely in geography, history, and culture are joined in sustaining

the common goals and ideals our Nation holds dear. The Stars and Stripes reminds us that, wherever we come from across our country, we are all first and foremost Americans.

Today as we stand at the threshold of the 21st century, we have a special opportunity to renew our flag's heritage and to honor the spirit of resilience in our national character that it signifies. As part of this effort, the White House Millennium Council's "Save America's Treasures Project," created by the First Lady, is helping to restore and preserve the original Star-Spangled Banner at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. This banner, "so gallantly streaming" as the British navy retreated from Baltimore Harbor after a failed assault on Fort McHenry in 1814, is immortalized in the bold and patriotic words of Francis Scott Key that now serve as our National Anthem. From the fledgling Nation of Key's time, defiantly opposing domination by European powers, the United States has evolved into a Nation of unrivaled influence in the world with an unparalleled commitment to democracy and human rights. During Flag Day and National Flag Week, we honor this incredible journey and the bright future it has made possible.

To commemorate the adoption of our flag, the Congress, by joint resolution approved August 3, 1949 (63 Stat. 492), designated June 14 of each year as "Flag Day" and requested the President to issue an annual proclamation calling for its observance and for the display of the Flag of the United States on all Federal Government buildings. The Congress also requested the President, by joint resolution approved June 9, 1966 (80 Stat. 194), to issue annually a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 falls as "National Flag Week" and calling upon all citizens of the United States to display the flag during that week.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim June 14, 1999, as Flag Day and the week beginning June 13, 1999, as National Flag Week. I direct the appropriate officials to display the flag on all Federal Government buildings during that week, and I urge all Americans to observe Flag Day

and National Flag Week by flying the Stars and Stripes from their homes and other suitable places.

I also call upon the people of the United States to observe with pride and all due ceremony those days from Flag Day through Independence Day, also set aside by the Congress (89 Stat. 211), as a time to honor our Nation, to celebrate our heritage in public gatherings and activities, and to publicly recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

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Interview With Jim Lehrer of the PBS "NewsHour"

June 11, 1999

Balkan Peace Process

Mr. Lehrer. And now to President Clinton. Mr. President, welcome.

The President. Thank you, Jim. I'm glad to be here.

Mr. Lehrer. Is the peace process, the withdrawal of the Serb troops and the other matters, proceeding on schedule today?

The President. So far it's proceeding in an orderly way. The Serb forces are withdrawing. They're withdrawing in a fashion that appears to our commanders to be consistent with their commitment to be gone in the 11-day time period. And General Jackson is readying our forces to deploy.

Mr. Lehrer. When will that happen, do you think? First, NATO troops—when will they go in now?

The President. I think it will be quite soon. It's his decision, and they are—I think there are a number of factors that are going